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September 11, 1980

LIBERIAN HEAD VISITS CUTTINGTON

SUACOCO, Liberia -- Liberia's new Head of State, Master Sergeant Samuel K. Doe, made an official visit here at Cuttington University College, a four-year educational institution sponsored by the Episcopal Church in this small town 115 miles north of Monrovia.

The 28-year-old Liberian leader, who came to office last April following a successful coup, said that he wanted to visit the college because "It has produced and continues to produce great men and women who are making significant contributions to the development of the nation."

Cuttington is one of the two highest institutions of learning in the whole country, the other being the University of Liberia at Monrovia.

Sgt. Doe, chairman of the People's Redemption Council, challenged the 600 residential students and its 70 faculty members to "continue the good academic tradition" of the 81-year-old Episcopal institution.

He added that a great number of people are illiterate in Liberia and that after more than a century of freedom this only can be interpreted as "designed by our oppressors to continue the suppression of the large majority of our people."

The Head of State ended his brief speech by asking all educational institutions to "make meaningful contributions towards the nation-building process."

In a welcoming statement, the Rev. Emmanuel W. Johnson, President of Cuttington University College, explained the critical financial situation of the institution and outlined the services provided by the college hampered by the "high operational costs due to the present day world-wide inflation."

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He added that the physical growth of the college "which we should dream of in terms of more dormitories, more classrooms and other teaching facilities is sometimes secondary to trying to remain alive by providing for the students who are already admitted."

Father Johnson pledged to continue providing the youth of Liberia with an education that is "purposeful and meaningful and takes care of the total person -- mind, body, and soul."

Cuttington College, founded by the Episcopal Church in 1889, has graduated more than 45 percent of Liberia's degree holders. It is the only private four-year college in West Africa.

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